

National Catholic Theater Conference

PRODUCTION CALENDAR

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In This Issue:

Reverend F. G. Dinneen, S.J.

Repertory - The Next Step

Staging "Career Angel"

Introducing New Members

Visiting Headquarters

They're Off

Catching Up

Royalty Reductions

Published and Unpublished

Broadway Review

New Title - New Offer

Mission Plays

Exhibiting

Monthly Evaluation - "Career Angel"

REVEREND F. G. DINNEEN, S.J.

Father Dinneen in a note to Emmet Lavery at the end of July wrote, "I had a dream the other night, and in it I saw the Conference meeting at Chicago again!" Thus recently were we reminded of Father's sincere and kindly interest in the Conference, and we stored this news away with our many happy memories of him, confident of his active cooperation in the 1945 Convention plans.

And now we have a letter from our President, Charles Costello, written on his departure for Chicago to attend the funeral of Father Dinneen: "The Conference has lost its truest friend. It was he who first offered the facilities of the Loyola Community Theater to make the ideals of Catholic Theater a reality. It was he who gave freely of his time and experience - long hours in conference and in traveling to inaugurate the movement - and of his financial help when the need was greatest. In all this he was wholly unselfish, seeking no gain nor advancement personally but living the motto 'A great deal of good can be accomplished if we are not too concerned with who is to get the credit'."

"Ours is a stumbling tribute to one whom we owe a lasting debt. Though we shall miss his cheering presence, we are certain the Conference may count on his efficacious help for next June's convention and always."

Rev. Thomas F. Carey, O.P. member of the Executive Committee, will sing a High Mass of Requiem for Father Dinneen on October 14 at St. Vincent Ferrer's Church in New York. Those Conference members who cannot attend will join us spiritually, we know, in grateful and earnest prayer for Father Dinneen on that day especially.

REPERTORY - THE NEXT STEP
by Emmet Lavery

The Catholic Theater Conference and its members are now in a position to give the country something it has not had since the days of Eva Le Gallienne or the Federal Theater: a repertory theater on a scale which is both national and regional at one and the same time. In the larger cities a strong repertory theater might be the ideal center of activity for post-college actors and directors who, on the basis of their school and college work, are looking for new worlds to conquer.

Suppose, just for one moment, we had a strong repertory company in New York, Chicago, Boston, Detroit, Los Angeles, New Orleans, etc. And suppose that company had in its permanent repertory such plays as Thornton Wilder's Our Town, Paul Carroll's Shadow and Substance, and T. S. Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral? These are plays that could be done on street corners or in parks, in the living room or on a lawn. Except for Murder in the Cathedral casting is not too difficult. But even in this, a good women's chorus is the main prerequisite - and we have an increasing number of good women's choruses.

These and plays like them (for these are only samples) would improve with the playing and so would the actors. They would not only enrich our own tradition. They would widen and deepen the base of American theater in the only way that it can be widened and deepened; by holding fast to the great plays which we have known in our day. Surely, if courageous young German playwrights are already talking of the day when they can rebuild the new and the true Germany by plays for street corners and subway platforms, we can hardly fail to explore the technique for our own country.

Here certainly is a form of theater activity ideally within the Catholic scheme of things. And here perhaps is the ideal American repertory system in the only background that can afford it - the non-professional stage where the thing is done for the love of the thing itself and not for the profits involved.

Think it over. Why wouldn't a repertory theater be the ideal city-wide activity for the parish and college actors who have already won their spurs? Wouldn't you like to be always "up" in your favorite play, even if you didn't have to play it more than a few times every six months?

STAGING "CAREER ANGEL"
by Dennis Gurney

From a director's viewpoint the most important factor in Career Angel is Moods: light comedy, Not Farce. Broadway's production failed precisely here: the Angel was brash and hard voiced; Brother Gregory, who should be torn between his love and understanding of Brother Seraphim and his appreciation of Brother Fidelis' genuine concern for their material welfare, was played monotonously and without sympathy; Brother Fidelis was a waspish fussbudget, whereas, though he is entirely lacking in a sense of humor, he should be played with dignity. The whole mood is set by Brother Seraphim, a gentle soul with a solid Christian humor.

For details: It seems essential that the Angel be made to "materialize" on his first entrance (on Broadway he came on like a gladiator entering the arena). In Blackfriars' production a fireplace was recessed upstage center. One side of this recess had a panel which opened offstage. As lights faded when Seraphim closed the windows (distracting the audience's attention) the angel sidled in (his costume blended with the set), and he was discovered leaning nonchalantly against the mantel when Seraphim turned on lamps and the lights were brought up. This fixed the supernatural background for the Angel. To my mind this is indispensable, and the Angel should be kept as ethereal as possible throughout. His tea-drinking and cooky-eating in the Broadway version was not funny and served only to make him too mortal. He should never cross in front of other players because, again, by blotting out other characters he becomes "too, too solid flesh."

The Blackfriars' set was simple. If you would like to see a rough sketch of it, you may secure a copy by writing to the National Catholic Theatre Conference.

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This month with Mr. Lavery's article on repertory Theater we begin a series of articles by guest contributors. Watch Column 1, Page 2 in November's issue for "High School Theater". Staging suggestions of the month will appear in this column regularly.

TITLE: Career Angel

AUTHOR: Rev. Gerard M. Murray

HISTORY: First produced in May 1943 by The Father Ryan Players of Cathedral College, Brooklyn, for whom it was written; Blackfriars' Guild production, one month's engagement, Nov.-Dec. 1943; Commercial production on Broadway opened May 1944.

EVALUATION: Here is Catholic Theater at its best: an original play written for a Catholic producing unit and its discriminating audience, and given wider acclaim through production by a professional Catholic Theater unit. At that time NY drama critics were unanimous in their praise of its originality and light-hearted humor. For publication it has been revised in minor details. The author has retained the Nazi plot, which makes production more timely now than after victory though the appeal of its witty dialogue and sound characterization will undoubtedly outlive the era of enemy landings for sabotage. Three men and one boy must be talented actors; all parts are well defined.

SYNOPSIS: Brother Seraphim, ex-actor and loved founder of a boy's orphanage trusts in Divine Providence to provide finances and continues to order baseball equipment for his charges, though the Brothers have no visible means of paying for it or for the food bill. Brother Gregory, the Director, is aligned with Brother Seraphim until the latter claims his Guardian Angel is sitting on the office desk. Then Brother Fidelis, ex-accountant, advocates firm measures. Seraphim becomes suspect by the Brothers, while the audience directs its suspicions to a neighboring benefactor. This Career Angel, however, has a flair for solving all kinds of problems, even to convincing Brother Fidelis of his presence.

TYPE: Light Comedy; Present Day; Three Acts

CHARACTERS: 6 Men, 12 Boys

SET: One interior; essential: French windows through which Angel enters and exits.

DIRECTION: Keep within the frame of light comedy, not farce. Though the Angel enters into the Brothers' problems, his superiority and ethereal quality must be maintained. He should always cross upstage of other actors.

PRODUCTION: Simple

AUDIENCE: Universal

PUBLISHER: Dramatists Play Service, 6 East 39th St., New York, 16, N.Y. Play copies: 75¢; Royalty: \$25. each performance.

ADAPTATION: Individual groups may receive permission to make adaptations, but no feminine adaptation has been submitted as yet. One all-feminine production is scheduled for November; Dramatists will examine this script, and if it is to be made available we shall inform you.

10/1/44.

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SYNOPSIS: Brother Gerard, ex-actor and loved founder of a boy's orphanage trusts in Divine Providence to provide finances and continues to do his best for his charges, though the Brothers have no viable means of paying for it or for the food bill. Brother Gregory, the Director, is aligned with Brother Gerard until the latter claims his Guardian Angel is sitting on the office desk. Then Brother Gerard, ex-accountant, advocates firm measures. Gerard becomes suspect by the Brothers, while the audience directs its suspicions to a neighboring benefactor. This Career Angel, however, has a flair for solving all kinds of problems, even to convincing Brother Gerard of his presence.

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Copyright 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

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10/1/44

NEW MEMBERS

With the right hand saying 'hearty welcome' and the left, 'tell us more about yourselves' we greet new Conference members.

Among community theaters: Los Angeles Theater Unit; Cathespian Guild, Montreal; St. Paul's Players, Washington; Blackfriars' Guild, Albany. From the parishes: Our Lady's Dramatic Club, Marlborough, Mass. Representing colleges and universities: Loyola College Dramatic Society, Montreal; Props and Paint, College of New Rochelle; Marycrest College Players, Iowa College of St. Francis Little Theater, Joliet; The Jongleurs, Immaculate Heart College, Los Angeles; and The Father Ryan Players, Cathedral College, Brooklyn. In the high school area: The Footlighters, Blessed Sacrament H.S., Wichita; Mt. Mercy Academy, Grand Rapids; St. Mary's High Dramatic Club, Burlington, Wisc.; and St. Paul's H.S., Worthington, Iowa. Center of Information Pro Deo, Central Catholic Library, Montreal, and National Catholic Community Service have also subscribed.

Individual members likewise emphasize varied fields: Drama Critic of "America", Elizabeth Jordan, Brooklyn's C Y O Drama Moderator Rev. Michael Fleming, and Sister Petrona of Wichita's Catholic Action Bookshop provide specific examples of Conference usefulness. Augmenting the list: Sister Aline, O.P., Marywood Academy, Grand Rapids; Vera Beauchat, Hamilton, Kansas; Rev. C. J. Boylan, S.J., Woodstock, Maryland; Rev. A.J. Riley, Saint John's Seminary, Boston; Mother Aquinas Jennings, O.S.U., Marquette H.S., Alton, Ill.; Rev. Gordon George, S.J., St. Mary's College, Halifax; Rev. James Hanlon, Eddystone, Pa.; Rev. J.J. Goff, Springfield, Ill.; Sister Mary Felica, Atlanta, Ga. and Joseph Rice, Los Angeles.

VISITING

Columbia's guest lecturer on Philosophy, Rev. Roberto Saboia de Madeiros, S.J., proved to be another Catholic Theater enthusiast. Father Saboia called at headquarters to collect material for his Brazilian exhibit of Catholic activities in the U.S., and yes, suggestions for his own drama group at Rio.... Miss K. E. Murphy covering New York for the Cathespian Guild and the Central Catholic Library, assorted play-going and library activities discriminately on an August visit from Montreal, Canada.

THEY'RE OFF

Our Lady's Dramatic Group of Immaculate Conception Church, Marlborough, Mass. bids firmly for state as well as city honors with its program: Nov. 14-15, Career Angel; Dec. 29, Chesterton's Magic; Feb. 13 - 14, A Connecticut Yankee; and for the finale, Murder in a Nunnery.

Joseph Rice, director of Los Angeles Theater Unit and The Jongleurs of Immaculate Heart College, promising future reports on LATU, sends us The Jongleurs' schedule: for pre-election days, First Lady; in Lent, an adaptation of The Comedian; for spring, The Skin of Our Teeth; plus a Shakespearean directed by Frayne Williams and operetta by Mme. E. Wynne.

Props and Paint has settled on Ramona and is considering a Moliere revival; two more productions, yet undecided, will round out the customary four-star program of the producing unit at College of New Rochelle, N.Y.

Announced for Oct. 7-8, Murder in a Nunnery at Art Institute Theater by Dayton Blackfriars'.

New York's Blackfriars' are casting a family comedy to open October 26.

The Laboratory Group of Pittsburgh's Catholic Theater Guild anticipated the season with two one-acts on Aug. 29; Suppressed Desires and At the Sign of the Cleft Heart.

With registration in Dramatic classes at Immaculate Conception Academy almost doubled, Cameo Players anticipate a banner season. Sister Mary Angelita has generously sent us a resumé of her summer's research on short plays for girls.

The Players of St. Catherine's High School have chosen Rip Van Winkle for their contribution to Racine's Children's Theater series; performances are scheduled at St. Rose and St. Aemilian orphanages and St. Benedict's School, all in Milwaukee.

Marywood College Players anticipate an early production of Song of Bernadette.

CATCHING UP

The Barat Association of Eden Hall, Philadelphia received a special citation from the Treasury Department last season; \$16,000 was raised on one intermission auction.

Marywood College Players are still enthusiastic over There Also Is the Manger Christmas original by one of their own members.

ROYALTY REDUCTIONS

Each October we announce the special royalty rates available to group members of NCTC. Group members desiring to produce a play on this list should notify us of their scheduled production (date and number of performances) in order that we may certify their active NCTC membership to the publisher. Royalty payments are required by the publisher at least 30 days before performance, so allow enough time for necessary correspondence.

<u>Baker's Plays</u>	<u>Reduced from:</u>	<u>To:</u>
Little Plays of St. Francis	\$5. ea.	
(more than 3-one evening)		\$15.

Dramatists Play Service

Doodle Dandy	\$10.	\$7.50
Days Without End	\$35.	\$30.
Father Malachy's Miracle	\$35.	\$25.
Heaven Can Wait	\$50.	\$35.-25.
In Time to Come	\$25.	\$20.
Ladies in Retirement	\$25.	\$20.-15.
Shadow and Substance	\$35.	\$25.

E. P. Dutton & Co.

Holy Night	\$25.	\$20.
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Samuel French

Ever Since Eve	\$25.	\$20.-15.
First Year, The	\$25.	\$20.-15.
Man's House, A	\$25.	\$20.
Murder in the Cathedral	\$35.	\$25.-20.
Our Town	\$25.	\$20.-15.
Tobias and the Angel	\$25.	\$20.-15.

Dramatic Publishing Co.

Great Big Doorstep, The	Ask for NCTC
Nine Girls	Special rate

PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED

"The Song of Bernadette", dramatized by Jean and Walter Kerr and first produced for an enthusiastic audience at Catholic University this summer, is promised for October 1 release by Dramatic Publishing Co., Chicago. We have chosen it for our special play resumé to accompany November's Calendar.

That scene from "Storm" in our publicity folder is at present a Lorelei. The script, produced at CU a year ago, is in an agent's hands. When available we shall advise you....Erratum: royalty on "Junior Miss" in Dramatists Play Service, new catalog should read \$50. not \$5.

BROADWAY REVIEW

Arrivals on Broadway since our May comments include:

Anna Lucasta - sordid and almost repulsive play originally written for a Polish family, well acted by its present negro cast. Catherine Was Great - long, dull reiteration of one joke by Mac West in thirteen costumes.

New York City Center offers 11 performances of Helen Hayes' "Harriet" (to Oct. 7) and then "The Merry Widow". Judged by past productions, these should be good. Pick-Up-Girl - realistic picture of Children's Court putting the parents on trial. Very moving, but painful. Song of Norway - beautiful music extremely well sung, with Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.

Ten Little Indians - fairly exciting melodrama with slow first act. Only two of cast left to take curtain calls.

NEW TITLE - NEW OFFER

Dramatics Magazine, formerly The High School Thespian, to emphasize its appeal to educational theater - directors, students and teachers - offers to NCTC members a reduced subscription rate, \$1.50, for the monthly Oct.-May issues. The address remains the same: College Hill Station, Cincinnati, Ohio. Ernest Bavely, Editor, underlines the requirement: to obtain this special rate you must state that you are a member of NCTC.

MISSION PLAYS

The Catholic Students Mission Crusade has announced and published copies of prize winning scripts in their Mission Play-Writing Contest. Sister Mary Paul, O.P., active in drama at Rosary College was awarded "first" for "Jadwiga of Poland" Seminars at St. Mary's Baltimore and Duns Scotus, Detroit, second and third. Copies now in our library.

EXHIBITING

Important feature of our Convention next June will be an exhibit of photos of your productions this season. With the first show start your collection of a few of the best scenes from each. We'll issue a

